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643 721 While Nuri thus stood at bay against enemies in his own tribe, his eldest son, Nauaf, was charged with leading the Ruala against their external enemies. Nuri was the father of a large family and was in fact credited with eighty-two children, of whom thirty-seven were sons, nearly all of whom died violent deaths.

A few days after this first meeting with Nuri Sha'lan, I paid a visit to Nauaf, whose tents were pitched a day's ride away, by the rain-water pools of Rukuban, one hundred and twenty odd miles east of Damascus.

Nauaf differed greatly from his father. He lacked the old *Sheykh's* strong personality. Nor had he the talent 101 to organize for warfare a tribe so vast as the Ruala, with 162 its seven thousand tents, thirty-five thousand souls, and over three hundred thousand camels.

721 He had just mustered another small camel-troop to strengthen his forces operating against Jauf, the oasis at the southeastern end of the wide, fertile depression of the Wadi Sirhan. They had already taken a few lesser fortified outposts. But these successes had brought Nauaf little credit: neither from his own tribesmen nor from the subjugated settlers could he win the respect which would have consolidated his position. Moreover [438] this attack on Jauf was a reversal of tribal policy. From of old the Ruala had peacefully traded with that oasis, bartering their camels, wool, cheese, and butter for dates, barley, salt, coffee, tent fittings, camel-saddles and textiles. Suddenly, and quite against the old *Sheykh's* intentions, Nauaf conceived the scheme of monopolizing that trade for himself and occupying the oasis as a strategic stronghold from which to dominate Northern Arabia and the caravan routes to Nejd.

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643 669 virtual dictator of Arabia, to whom the world to-day accords its sincere admiration.

At the time of which I speak, however—in 1912—
622 619 721 Nauaf, the son of Nuri Sha'lan, was at war against the hereditary enemy of the Ruala, the Shammar Bedouins and their ruler, Ibn Rashid, who held Jauf. The capture of that oasis was the objective of long and bitter fighting. Much blood was shed; every year took its long toll of human lives. Now, however, Nauaf had come close to his goal and soon Jauf actually fell into his hands.

114 Nauaf had three sons, amongst whom was the young Prince, Amir Fuaz; it is with him I would begin my tale. For to this child I owe the fact that I was privileged to live with the Ruala as one of them, that I was permitted to visit them eleven times in twenty-two years; that I wandered, hunted, and fought with them; that on horseback or camel-back, I crossed and recrossed their grazing-grounds year in and year out; that I was adopted into the tribe as a Rueyli chieftain; and that they knew and loved me as I knew and loved them.

856 868 Amir Fuaz was just eight years of age. Even so, he already had the reputation of being an adroit rider and a good shot, though his legs were yet rather short to grip the flanks of a mare and his arms to weak to balance a carbine for any length of time. "Wordly learning", as the Arabs call reading and writing, held no interest for him. He preferred to go camel-riding with me or to join
777 in the hunt. His mother, Misha'il, who had gone blind, proudly related to me that it was an omen of good for the future that Nuri Sha'lan had laid the halter of his war-mare and a silver *khanjar* in the boy's cradle. The

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dabbed the scratch on my forehead and rubbed four drops of blood on his own forehead between his black eyebrows—the old Bedouin "*Nur-ed-Dam*", the "Light of Blood."

In this unusual, dramatic fashion I became, by the will of Allah, the blood-brother of Amir Fuaz.

Our friendship was soon to receive baptism by fire. A band of Ruala, two hundred and sixty-eight warriors, led by Rasheyd-ibn-Whafa, set out on a *ghazu* (raid) into the Hamad and the Wudian region, against the Shammar Bedouins, and I accompanied them. We rode twelve hours the first day. In camp that night we were overhauling our riding-gear, water-skins, and so forth, when to our amazement we discovered, curled up in one of the goat-hair camel saddlebags—huge receptacles made of goat skins—little Amir Fuaz, sound asleep.

Not by the slightest sound or sign had he betrayed to us during the long and hard day's ride that we were carrying a stowaway. Our leader, Rasheyd (of the Muraf Ruala), wanted the boy taken home on the morrow by a camel-rider, but Fuaz pleaded so earnestly that the heart of the old freebooter was softened. He merely sent a mounted messenger to Misha'il's camp to let her know that her son was with us.

We were gone on this great *ghazu* almost two months. When we returned, worn out, having suffered serious losses, yet victorious, Amir Fuaz took four of the booty-camels, splendid fawn-coloured beasts, into the camp, and made them kneel before the tent of his blind mother. Misha'il, still a young woman, enquired pleasantly who was the stranger seeking her hospitality. Custom for-

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bade asking direct questions of a stranger. A Rueyli called out: "Khalati—it is a great prince who comes, O blessed daughter, to honour thee."

"And where is his *dira* (pasture) that I may send Hamar, our old slave, to proclaim him to our neighbour?"

"His name is 'The Young Falcon', and his *dira* extends as far as his eyes rove. It is thy son, O mother of Amir Fuaz."

In this foray, Rasheyd, the leader, had his right hand severed by a sword cut. He fainted from loss of blood. Our slaves then plunged the mutilated arm in boiling fat—a desperate remedy but successful, for Rasheyd recovered. He carried his amputated hand from that day forward in the saddle of his racing-camel. It dried up completely, like the hand of a mummy.

When we reached Bahr Saigal, not far from Dumeyr, the first Turkish fortress in Syria, its Commandant sent a cavalry detachment to our camp. He had been informed by telegraph of our illicit operations in the vicinity of the cultivated lands of Mesopotamia. His troopers were seeking Rasheyd, who was to be made answerable. But Rasheyd could not reconcile himself to the prospect of a Turkish dungeon. He placed his withered hand in a leather bag and dictated to Nauaf's *katib* (scribe) the following letter addressed to the Commandant at Dumeyr:

"In the name of the Benevolent and Compassionate! As *askar* (soldier) I cannot serve thy *Padishah* (Sultan), for I have but a stump of an arm. As thy prisoner I could do no work for thee; nay, as a friend I could not

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even grasp thy hand. What use then being with thee? As a token of my everlasting surrender, however, I offer to thee my hand, since thou art wont to cut off the hand of a thief. Be sure it is my own hand—the hand of Rasheyd-ibn-Whafa, the robber. May God be forbearing with us."

VI

The Commander of Our Camel-Saddles

721 [202] WHEN WE DREW rein, slaves were already lighting a huge signal-fire to call together the warriors of the tribe. A strong raiding-party of the Bishri (the three federated clans of the Anaza: the Fid'an, Saba, and Amarat) was reported to be advancing. It was said to number five hundred camel-riders, with some hundreds of war-mares. Perhaps the numbers were exaggerated.

That night Amir Fuaz made all his dispositions. Before the first grey of dawn Faris was at my bedside. "Awake, if thou wouldst ride with us," I heard him say, with a laugh. I jumped up and hastened to make ready for the march. Faris handed me a filled water-skin, a lump of pressed dates, several balls of hard Bedouin cheese, the size of a fist, and a stack of fresh-baked [492] bread-cakes. With the help of Mnahi, who was to be my rider-attendant, I stowed everything in the saddlebags of my *dhalul* (racing-camel), saddled Sadha, my white war-mare, and tied her by her halter to the dromedary's cinch.

Amir Fuaz had appointed Faris leader of our camel corps.

726 It was still dark when we started. The moon had set. The night was calm and the voices of the riders chanting as they rode made no echo, but moved over the desert

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XV

Famine and War

587 628 TARFA, SISTER OF Amir Fuaz, who had married Mijhem ibn Meheyd, the Chief of the Fid'an, died suddenly. Thereupon, what must the fifty-five-year-old widower do but forthwith sue for the hand of another sister of the Ruala Prince, Fuwasa, who was seventeen. Fuaz refused, and declared publicly, before the men in assembly, that he considered Ibn Meheyd too old for his young sister. Thereupon the vain Fid'an chief flew into a towering rage and swore that he would take vengeance, not only on his brother-in-law, Amir Fuaz, but also on the whole Ruala tribe, and the Sha'lan family in particular. All this ultimately came to pass.

628 ● 721 731x During the last few months, Ibn Meheyd had matured his plans for revenge. He had stirred up the neighbouring tribes of the Fid'an into joining him in war on the Ruala. It seemed as if the famine, threatened by the failure of rain in the Hamad and other grazing regions, would now become an additional formidable ally of Amir Fuaz's foes. Thirty-five thousand Ruala, with seven thousand tents and about three hundred and fifty thousand camels would be forced to invade the grazing territory of enemies, unless sufficient rain fell in the Hamad within the next few days.

000 As yet, life ran its familiar round. But over all hovered the spectres of thirst, hunger, and death.

The Ruala did not fear war. Were they not strong

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731x 221x on unconcerned, without a check. The man remaining behind would cut up the camel in a few minutes, then hurry on to catch up with the tribe, leaving only the entrails, the head and legs, on the trampled ground.

The losses in the camel herds increased day by day. From some hundreds a day they had risen to sinister figures. According to Fuaz, two thousand camels died or had to be killed daily.

•[721] Onward, ever onward; though hostile tribes made some attempt to stem this tide of hungry men and beasts, and the Saba and the Fid'an drove off a few of the smaller herds, the main body of the Ruala was as yet safe from attack. But isolated skirmishes and small raids grew in number the farther the Ruala drew away from the independent domain of Ibn Sa'ûd, and passing through Transjordania, penetrated into Syria. There indeed the situation threatened to become serious. French aeroplanes droned over the restless sea of men and beasts, but so far only scouting planes were out, seeking to ascertain the strength of the invading Ruala host.

731x 618 721 The "Fransawi" could not, without some protest, permit a whole nation of warlike Bedouins to roam so far beyond its own ground and invade Syria. The settlers in the French mandated territory were already shaking for fear of war among the Bedouin tribes, and were making preparations for the defence of their villages and fields. The Druses, on the contrary, warlike people of the Hauran Mountains, were perhaps rejoicing in anticipation of a new turmoil in Syria, from which they might hope to gain more than they had from the last. In that quarrel the Ruala, hereditary enemies of the Druses, did

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not take sides against the French. The French authorities immediately realized the danger, and promptly gave orders that the ancient caravan route from Damascus to Tudmur (Palmyra) and Deyr-ez-Zor (which passes south of the hills of the Abu Rijmeyn and branches off near Tudmur towards Baghdad) was to form the most northerly boundary beyond which the Ruala might not seek pasture. None must cross this line if armed or mounted.

Now the foes of the Ruala could triumph!

The Saba, the Muwali, Hadediyyin and all the others had the law of the land and the power of the French Government on their side—and they were confederates of Ibn Meheyd! What did they care for the misery of the Ruala? They only saw at hand a long-desired opportunity to fall upon and destroy this hated Ruala nation and take possession of their vast herds.

It was a day in April, when our distress seemed to have reached the last extremity beyond which endurance could not go—when death stared every man and animal in the face—that I entered the tent of Faris, which was pitched on a hillock a little apart. The tent was empty. The mother and sister of the young man were probably searching for truffles, roots and dry herbs for fuel. As I flung myself down by the glowing ashes inside the tent, I heard the voice of Faris ibn Naif behind the tent. It was loud and excited, which was an unusual thing for him, for the calm and self-control of my friend had always been exemplary. He was neither a Philistine nor a bigot, but a man of a moral purity such as I never found surpassed, even among the Bedouins. I

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ritory had not entered their minds. Only our black or brown herder's coats betrayed us on closer view as possible foes. 579 [291]

We thanked our lucky stars for this error which had saved our lives and sent the robbers on their way unmolested, but without arms and ammunition. The wounded man we carried with us to the camp of Ibn Meheyd.

Before they left us, these fellows had the impudence to ask us to make a detour and take them into the neighbourhood of a Saba camp which they intended to raid. Incorrigible rogues!

"But the Saba are your allies!" I cried out, astonished.

"What of that?" answered the leader. "Thou are *ghim* (enemy) of the Saba."

"Magnanimous Duleym!" said Mijhem ironically, "thou art in error; we are on a peace mission."

"Allah! How fastidious art thou!" responded the man, with equal irony, and turned his back on us.

Our head-cloths fluttered in the wind as we raced on again over the undulating plain. Small groups of riders on camels and on horses appeared from time to time. They stood still as we passed, observing us from a distance. 731x 221x

We had also noticed three automobiles which held a course parallel to ours for some distance, but disappeared now and again behind a hill or in some depression. After one such disappearance, they reappeared much nearer to us. We halted and signalled to the motorists. They 721

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●721 circled about us with rifles ready for action. Then they got out of their cars and advanced towards us, with their rifles cocked.

As they approached, they yelled out that we were spies who had come to reconnoitre their land and camps. One of them recognized the wounded Duleym and began to question him, but the man remained silent, except to say that he would speak only before the *sheykh*. I overheard a few words which clearly showed that we stood in danger of immediate death. I thought it wise at least to warn their Akid.

"We are in Syria. Not only Ibn Meheyd, but also the Fransawi (French) will hold thee answerable for our safety!"

"Then prove thy friendly intentions," he answered.

I proposed that we should accompany him and his men to their camp.

He accepted my proposal only after we had handed over our rifles; our pistols we were allowed to retain.

619 [361] Following our enemies, we drove in a northeasterly direction. After a few miles we met the first herdsmen and their flocks and herds, and half an hour later the great camp of the allied Fid'an, Saba and Amarat Bedouins came in sight—tent ranged by tent in vast array. All the while new families with pack-camels came in and took their places on the wide plain, while women and slaves hastened to raise the black tents.

769 [623] A young acquaintance of Berjas ibn Hedeyb rode up to us and recognized me. He accompanied us to the large council tent of the assembled *shiyukhs*, and on the way related that a few days earlier some Fid'an had

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visited the grave of the old Hero-Chief, Turki ibn Meheyd, at Aklat Suab.

As an offering to the memory of his forebear (Turki was killed in battle against the Ruala, although his daughter Turkiyye was married to the Ruala chieftain, Sattam ibn Sha'lan) Ibn Meheyd had sacrificed a fat camel over the grave: "So that Allah might read his heart and give him victory over the Ruala." This is a heathen, pre-Islamic custom of the Arabian Bedouins.

It would seem that Ibn Meheyd and his vassals had made not only material, but also spiritual preparations for a decisive war against the Ruala.

Our enemies were now assembled, and the conference of the chiefs was in full swing when we arrived.

Ibn Meheyd looked aged and the bitterness of his thoughts had hardened his features. This unpleasing impression was deepened by his beard and eyebrows, which he had dyed black.

A thick woollen shawl enveloped his head and throat, despite the warm sunny day. He had been a sufferer for years from a wasting fever which he, like so many other Fid'an Bedouins, had contracted in the unhealthy lowlands of the Euphrates.

On our appearance Ibn Meheyd had risen and taken a step forward, but on recognizing the familiar faces of his enemies, he turned back and beckoned to the leader of his Negro bodyguard. Even to me he had not given the customary salute, but only swept me with a black look. Fortunately, I perceived at once that we had put our heads into a hornet's nest, and I whispered to my

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friends on no account to step within the circle of the *shiyukhs* without me.

No word of greeting or otherwise had come from these. Some turned away with ostentatious disdain. Ibn Meheyd, with his back to us, was excitedly whispering into the ear of his black body-servant, who was listening with bent head. The men of the bodyguard stood with eyes fixed on those two, their hands round the butts of the pistols in their belts, ready to draw.

Meanwhile, more by instinct than design, I seated myself close to Ibn Meheyd and motioned Faris and Mijhem to sit down too. (Abd el-Karim and the two slaves were waiting in our motor-car.) Furious ejaculations burst from every mouth at the liberties I was taking. At the sound, Ibn Meheyd turned in surprise; silently he regarded Faris and Mijhem with lowered brows and sinister eyes. I divined, nay, I could feel the murder in his mind. One sign from him, and there was an end of my friends; perhaps of me too.

There was not the fraction of a second to lose. Hailing the despised "coffee-cook" by the hearth, I called out to him: "O boy—strength to thee!" The old Negro looked up, startled, but did not dare to answer me; he only rolled his eyes timidly back and forth between me and his master. Suddenly Ibn Meheyd made a sign and his guardsmen drew their pistols. The last fragments of my courage and self-possession dropped from me and my knees trembled. But—the pistols were not levelled. Faris and Mijhem had been quicker than the guard. With great presence of mind they had whipped out their revolvers and had Ibn Meheyd covered before the black-

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amoors could take aim. And this they dared not do now.

This coolness helped to restore my own composure and I cried to the cook reproachfully:

"Is it forbidden in the house of Ibn Meheyd to present the cup of peace to the guest who has alighted at his sanctuary?" The old Negro dithered, as he reluctantly reached for the small china cup that was placed upside down on the handle of a big coffeepot to dry; he turned his face anxiously towards his chieftain. Unwilling to wait any longer, I jumped up and went quickly to the hearth, helped myself to the cup, took the pot from the bed of glowing embers—it burned my fingers cruelly, but I bit down the pain—and poured out the customary measure. Then I went up to Ibn Meheyd and presented the cup to him with the salutation of peace. He looked at me with bowed head from under lowered lids.

He must obey the Law of the Desert; he must take the proffered cup. Nor could he play with the lives of my friends without forfeiting his own. At the first aggressive move, he would be riddled with bullets, for Faris and Mijhem still had their pistols trained on him. He turned from me, but I put my hand on his shoulder: "Peace!" I said. He turned round again, a fanatic light in his eyes; but, despite the angry face, he now opened his lips to bid me peace and asked me to sit in his own seat.

Then, and not till then, Faris and Mijhem dared to put up their weapons; the word "peace" had been formally pronounced by the host. Slaves heaped cushions for us against the camel-saddle.

Ibn Meheyd himself then took the coffee-cup from

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619 the slave's hand and presented it to me with, "Welcome!
●721 May it please thee!" Twice he repeated these words,
576 which are a guarantee of peace and safety. Then Faris and Mijhem also drank with him.

000 To us, used to the ways of Western civilization, such a train of events and their result must seem incomprehensible. But after one has lived a length of time with the Bedouins, one learns to understand that the unwritten laws of the Bedouin social code are closely adapted to the conditions of life in the desert and have sufficed, from time immemorial, to meet its manifold circumstances. Without these rules of the game, indeed, all human life in nomad Arabia would have become extinct long since.

619 After I had asked, and Ibn Meheyd had granted me,
728 leave to speak, I set forth the object of my mission and exhorted the assembled *shiyukhs*, with what persuasive eloquence I could muster, to make peace with the Ruala, and, as in former years, share the grazing-grounds like
[186] brothers. I dwelt on the advantages of unity and the evils of dissension, and drove home my argument by pointing out that by their present policy they were only playing into the hands of foreign powers, who, after all the Bedouin tribes had been weakened individually, would encompass the complete destruction of them all.

My exhortations and arguments were received in cold silence. Most of the chiefs sat with bent heads and tapped the ground with their camel-sticks in apparent boredom. I felt pretty sure, however, that their indifference was assumed, and I would not let myself be dis-

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Two days later we camped at the well of Al-Hajal,
B 312 415 where our camels and horses were watered. One of the Fid'ans scraped a shallow hole in the soil and spread the saddle leather from one of the camels over it. Into this simple but practical trough we poured the stale water from the well.

R 721 After we had watered our animals, we travelled onward in the dry bed of the Al-Hajal *wadi*. We were crossing a flat between two branches of it when suddenly shots rang out and bullets whistled over our heads.

The Fid'an wheeled instantly to gallop out of range, but they did not get far. Our assailants, imperfectly visible but obviously numerous, followed up their warning volley with a raking fire that in as many seconds unhorsed four of the fugitives. Seeing that to escape was impossible, and to fight hopeless, they all stopped and signalled their surrender to the advancing force of camel-riders. More than a hundred of these had grown out of the ground, as it were, before my astonished eyes. The Fid'an had walked into a trap. They had been too R reckless even to send scouts ahead.

[493] I knew instantly that the newcomers were Ruala. The Saba have as intimate a knowledge of that region, but only the Ruala take the field with so many fine racing-camels; the Saba, like the Fid'an, favour horses.

"The Lord be with us!" exclaimed Matan, the leader R of the Fid'an freebooters, now thoroughly frightened. [627] He clearly thought himself lost; and he had every reason to believe that I should use the opportunity of paying him back in kind. But I reassured him. "We have made peace with thee," I said, "and I shall tell the leader of

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these Ruala that thou hast actually accorded us thy protection that we might safely reach the grazing grounds of our friends. I shall ask him to permit thee and thy men this evening to camp in peace with the Ruala."

"Truly, thou lightest up my countenance," the Fid'an replied, overjoyed, "and I swear that I have now restored everything." To my amazement, I saw in his extended hand my costly compass, which I had supposed lost.

The Ruala, swaying on the backs of lean *dhaluls*, were drawing nearer. Well ahead of them galloped a horseman on a "red" (bay) mare, obviously their leader, and I cantered to meet him. He had his *kaffiyah* drawn over his face, so that when we met I could see only his eyes, and his voice came muffled: "Who art thou, rider on the 'blue' (grey) mare?"

For answer, I uncovered my face and said: "I yield myself to thee. And all these men"—pointing to Ali and the Fid'an—"I put under thy protection, O *Akid*, in the name of my brother and thy Amir, Fuaz."

The Rueyli drove his heels into his mare so that she plunged wildly and he had great difficulty in controlling her. He pulled down his *kaffiyah* and I was greatly astonished to see that it was Fuaz himself, but beside himself with rage. "Ride away, my brother," he said, "lest thy blood be answerable for my deeds. Like the panther, I winded these dogs of Fid'an that dare to yelp in the grazing grounds of the Ruala."

He was berserk, mad with the fighting frenzy of the Sha'lan. He tossed off his cloak, which caught on his mare's croup; he bared his arms and chest; he shifted his carbine from hand to hand, while his horse curvetted

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XXVI

The Stealing of the Mare

•721 AMIR FUAZ HAD not brought his tribesmen to al-Hajal for the purpose of routing out marauding Fid'an. The encounter with them was accidental. The object of the Ruala *ghazu* (raid) was the recovery of a blood mare which the Saba had "lifted" a short time before. Falha, the "Luckbringer", as she was called, was of the best strain in Arabia and famed throughout the land. As soon as Fuaz learned that she had been taken, he dispatched Mnahi to the Saba with an offer of forty camels [435] for her restitution—an exceedingly high value to put on a mare. But the Saba declined the offer. The only al- [425] ternative to buying back Falha, as the Saba well knew, would be taking her back by force; and Fuaz honourably informed them that such was his intention. This did [517] not amount to a declaration of war. It was rather a knightly challenge, and the rules of the game involved the tacit understanding that no blood should be shed unnecessarily on either side.

Fuaz's scouts—*Iyun*, the "eyes", the Bedouins call them—had tracked the mare to a Saba encampment in the vicinity and had thoroughly reconnoitered its surroundings. They had discovered that the Saba camels and horses, including Falha, were grazing under the guard of only a few youths, in a depression several miles away from the main camp, some seventy tents strong.

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This disposition gave Fuaz twofold satisfaction. It would facilitate the execution of his plan to recover his mare by stratagem and confirmed his assumption that the Saba did not reckon with the possibility of a Ruala raid so soon, as very little rain had fallen in that region and travel therefore was still very difficult. They probably thought that the Ruala would not venture so far into the inner Hamad until much later, when water and pasture would be plentiful. It was clear at all events that, for the time being, Falha's keepers felt themselves quite secure. Furthermore, if a skirmish proved unavoidable, the fighting would be away from the Saba tents, for Bedouins of noble lineage consider it barbarous to engage the enemy near their own camp. They believe that only the Turks, the "Franks" (Europeans) and the rulers of agricultural Arabia wage war in such a way as to endanger the women and children.

Luck favoured Fuaz's designs from beginning to end. We broke camp early in the morning and a few hours later circled round the pasture where the Saba horses were. Then we wheeled and got between them and the camp. The whole movement was made smoothly and without contact with our opponents. But now their outposts sighted our troop and sought to evade us and carry word to the camp. Our camel-riders easily caught the fugitives, who stopped when a few shots were fired over their heads and let themselves be taken without attempting any defence. They were mere boys, fourteen to sixteen years of age. In rough jest, their captors cut off some of their long plaits and with these bound them

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721 522 hand and foot. This was a terrible indignity to such proud lads, who set great store by their six or eight "horns", as the Arabs call these tresses.

721 233 It was nearly midday when we reached the depression in which the horses were grazing. It was a lovely scene, the sky was blue, the brilliant spring sun warm and pleasant, and the air was filled with the sweet smell of the fresh herbage. The horses and camels ranged about, browsing quietly. The sleepy herders were totally unaware of our presence until our camel-riders suddenly appeared over the lip of the depression. Then they awoke to a realization of what was happening. I was rather loath to disturb their *dolce far niente;* above all was I sorry for the Saba horses, which were to be so suddenly driven from their delectable pasture.

The mares raised their heads inquisitively as the herders, rudely awakened from their siesta, sprang to their feet and yelled warnings one to the other. A few of them were successful in loosening the woollen shackles of their horses, and, leaping on their backs, made their escape. They were but a handful, however, and of these two or three were eventually captured.

The horses of the Saba became restive as the Ruala horsemen galloped about them, but, shackled by the forelegs, they could only hobble round helplessly.

721 [231] At last our people cut out some twenty horses, including Falha, the brown mare of our search. Falha was shackled with iron links instead of the usual woollen ropes. Amir Fuaz had brought with him a couple of files in anticipation of such an eventuality. His delight on seeing Falha again was obvious; she was worth more

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to him and to the Ruala than all the rest of the horses put together. We now began in turns, two men at a time, to file through the iron shackles. When we had finished that task, Amir Fuaz kissed his mare's hoofs with joy. 721

Falha, feeling her freedom, commenced to prance and neigh while I held her by the halter. I begged Amir Fuaz to tie her to the saddle of my camel, so that I might lead her home. "Ride her!" he replied, and explained that we must mount the captured horses in order to get as far away from the enemy as possible in the shortest space of time. So I jumped on Falha's back and galloped off with my friends to where the camel-riders with the prisoners were awaiting us.

In all, the Ruala had seized twenty-three mares. As we bade farewell to the Saba herders, one of them, a young lad, stepped up to Amir Fuaz and cried: 721 577

"*Ayb*"—"Shame on thee!"

"Who art thou?" asked the young Prince.

"Jaza ibn Ajlan."

"And what is thy desire?"

"Behold—only with tears can I water Freyha (the Joybringer) when thou takest her away, and she will not again have the milk of her Naga (Milch-camel), and Simiha (the Soft-one) and Nauma (the Sleepy-one) and her daughters will also mourn for her."

Amir Fuaz appreciated the lad's grief for his lost mares and asked him further:

"And how old are Simiha and Nauma?"

"Simiha is one summer old and Nauma two. But see, Freyha is again in foal!"

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

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"And therefore thou would'st have back the mother of thy foals?"

"Not because of that, but because it is a shame that thou shouldst steal the *wool*-shackled mares from our pastures."

"Did I not honourably warn you?"

"We trusted thy word, which only referred to Falha, and therefore we shackled her with *steel;* all the other mares had only *woollen* shackles."

Amir Fuaz looked thoughtfully into the distance and, as was his habit, toyed with his hair-plaits. Then, twisting one of the locks round his index finger, he stared the young Saba straight in the eyes.

"Thou art daring. But thou speakest the truth and I am not offended. Now I understand why Falha alone wore iron shackles. Therefore I will reward thy trust. Falha is our booty; take back what belongs to thee."

The Prince ordered his men to dismount from the captured mares and return them to the Saba. He also commanded Mnahi to take the plaits cut from the heads of the young Saba from his saddlebag, into which he had stuffed them as souvenirs, and throw them away.

522 As Fuaz noticed me sitting peacefully and satisfied on Falha, he burst out laughing and cried:

"Allah Karim!—God is benevolent! Look at Aziz. First he comes on a raid against us, then we capture him, and now he rides home on our best mare."

Ali, my gallant protector, who stood near, took up the joke:

"Amir Fuaz will permit me to say that one must

2: Musil
721, 726, 727

MD4 Rwala MD4

[For songs, ditties, anecdotes and narratives of raids and warfare see category 116, pp. 512-522 and 532-661.]

2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

[302] 539x 852 [721] top of the head. As a rule only a tuft of it is left standing, the rest being shaven. *Mušarred* (or *jifekk*) *bowšeh*, liberates his loot. Fighting with the Turks (i. e. with the regular army) was difficult for the Bedouins and therefore greatly desired by them.

Jâ mnîfe jâ miznet aṣ-ṣejf
jâ brûḳaha jil'aženni
tel'ab 'ala-l-biẓ bel-kejf
waš 'âd low jiz'alenni.

O Mnîfe, O thou rain cloud of the early summer!
How dazzling its lightning is to me!
Thou canst play with the fair ones at thy will,
For I [in thy place] should not care if they grow angry with me.

[182] At the close of April, when summer begins, each rain is accompanied by a violent storm by which the atmosphere is greatly refreshed. Mnîfe, the wife of the head chief, needs not envy her female companions, as she excels them in both beauty and power.

Jâ bejt abu nawwâf
jâ minwet al-bâdi
w-rwijhom bel-ḳêẓ
ḥabra lel-warâdi
wa-ṣhûnahom bel-lêl
tawhi lha menâdi
teḥûfehen mnîfe
jâ bint al-aǧwâdi.

O thou tent of the father of Nawwâf!
O thou goal desired of the night pilgrim!
In summer their large water bags are
As a great rain pond from which water is brought.
To their dishes at night
The criers noisily invite;
They are prepared by Mnîfe,
A daughter of noble ancestors.

Abu Nawwâf is Prince an-Nûri; his wife Mnîfe is a daughter of the late Prince Saṭṭâm. *Bâdi*, like *sâjer*, means a traveler by night, or a visitor. By both the men's and the

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

bân, must not be taken on a raid or war expedition, for her rider would come back without booty. 777

Should the raiders on their march against the enemy meet a flock of goats or sheep, they halt until the animals pass. If they rode through the flock, they would cause their own defeat, for the enemy would scatter them in the same manner as they had scattered the goats or sheep. Whoever sights a solitary white gazelle, *ẓebi*, must not mount his mare for some time, for she would stumble under him, *taḳanṭar* or *taḳanṭa'*, and he might hurt himself and thus meet with failure. A black dog, *mballam*, should be killed at sight, as the fiend is hidden in him and thus brings the Rwejli bad luck. The flesh of the wild swine which roam especially in the Sirḥân depression or, according to the Rwala, in al-Wâdi, is enjoyed by the Bedouins, who know nothing of permitted or forbidden food; pork fat they use in healing both wounded men and animals, but they hate to meet a wild swine when starting on a raid or on any other undertaking, because it brings bad luck. When a solitary raven or a *rḫama* vulture is seen flying above the raiders, they shoot at it, crying: "May Allâh destroy thee! *Sab'ek* (or *Sab'eč*)." They fear that if they did not kill the birds they would feast on the bodies of the fallen. If a raider's rein breaks, he should return at once. The commander of an expedition must also turn back if he seats himself on a saddle wet by rain. A broken rein means that the mare will run about freely after her rider has been thrown from the saddle, while a wet saddle reminds one of the commander's blood flowing down it. When a camel or a mare returns home stained with the blood of her slaughtered rider, she is generally sold to another clan or to the settlers, as the kin of the fallen man abhor riding an animal over which the blood of their kinsman has been spilled.

825 492 [262] [757] [761]

DREAMS AS OMENS

Much importance is attached by the Rwala to dreams. During sleep a man's soul moves among spiritual beings from whom it can learn all things hidden from men, whether of the past, of the present, or of the future. In most cases Allâh is appealed to by the Bedouins to send them dreams concerning their return from an important undertaking, *ḥelm m'dwedi*. Such dreams Allâh grants especially to the commanders of

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2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

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raiding troops. If the commander sees in his dream girls with loosened hair, *banâten mufarra'ât*, or fresh clear water, green grass, cooked meals, etc., he knows that they will return home with booty and in good health, where all that he has seen in his dream will await them. If the commander in his dream pitches a tent or is holding a panther, he thanks Allâh for allowing him to capture the enemy's tent or make captive a brave foe. If he dreams of having rested with his troop under a green tree and of plucking figs and raisins from it, his comrades shout joyfully: "Success, success!" A green tree signifies booty without danger; the figs, she-camels; and raisins are symbolical of sheep and goats.

The commander of a Ḳa'âž'a raiding troop prayed for a dream concerning his return, *ḥelm m'âwdi*. When lying down at night, he looked at the North Star, *ǧedi*, fixedly, *talaḳḳa'-l-ǧedi*, and then fell asleep. Whereupon Allâh's spokesman, *ăl-munâbi*, appeared, asking him: "Dost thou sleep or art thou awake, *ent nâjem walla' žâ'ed*." "Awake," answered the commander, springing up in fear, *fazz*. After a while he again fell asleep. Once more the spokesman appeared to him, putting the same question as before. When the commander answered in the same words, the spokesman said: "O booty! Thy booty is to be a cushion of a litter fastened with a *ǧedi* rope. *jâ bedd beddak min beddi w-min meḥmelen beh ǧedi*." Then he disappeared. Waking up and unable to sleep any more, the commander now pondered over the meaning of this strange dream. When he told it to his comrades in the morning, they exclaimed: "Success, success! May Allâh will it! But we do not yet understand it! *Ḫejr ḫejr in šâ-llâḥ mâ na'ref ḥâḍa*." The commander was so terrified by his dream that he wanted to return, *enčaf*. Staying behind under some pretext, he turned into a deep gully and then started for home. However, after a while his camel suddenly turned around and galloped after the raiding troop, despite her rider's frantic efforts to stop her. Thus nothing was left to the commander but to go on with the raid. Before long he attacked the Meṣâliḫ, drove out their defenders, and, entering the camp by force, found himself before the chief's tent where the 'Aṭfa litter was standing, in which in times of danger the prettiest girl used to be seated in order to encourage the defenders to fight bravely and hold their ground. A cushion, *bedd*, such as is laid under the litter when fastened on the camel's back, was

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

lying beside it, and also a long rope, *ǧedi*, made of palm pith hung down from it. Then at last did the commander understand the meaning of his dream. Laying the cushion, *bedd*, on the saddle of a strong she-camel, with the help of his comrades he placed the litter there, fastening it with some straps, making it tight with the *ǧedi* rope, and rejoicing that he had taken from the Meṣâlîḫ clan their most precious possession, for once the 'Aṭfa litter is lost it must not be used again.

At one time the Rwala were camping near ar-Remṭe[1] in al-Ḥamâd. Rains had been abundant, the pasture was good everywhere, truffles and mushrooms grew in plenty, the camels gave more milk than ever before, and the Bedouins, therefore, were living in affluence, or, as it is called, were having an exceptionally good *rabî'*. Then it was that their head chief, Hazzâ', had a peculiar dream. He saw countless swarms of locusts coming from the inner desert, *min šerž* or *min mšarreḳ*, to his camp, crawling into the tents, upon the beds, and into the food supplies, all over the camels, and — a strange thing to relate — the locusts carried away all these things — tents, beds, supplies, and even the camels. Suddenly there was a flash of lightning among the camels, all the herds rose to their feet and galloped in the direction of the ...tled territory, *w-al-bel ḳâmat tehâbat w-haǧǧat mṛarrab*. Hazzâ' told the people of his dream, but nobody could explain it. At last, on the seventh day after the occurrence of the dream and when the herds had already grazed their fill on fresh grass in the morning, *jown šeb'at aṣ-ṣarî ṣubeḥ min al-'šeb*, there appeared in the south Prince Eben Rašîd's raiding troops from the inner desert; these drove back the defenders of Hazzâ''s camp, entered the camp, and began to load the tents with all that was in them on their own and on the captured camels. The herds together with their herdsmen were surrounded. The herdsman of the white camels, *mṛeddîr*, who longed to save his herd, the pride of the whole tribe, finally thought of this stratagem. He saw that some pack camels were still carrying their pack saddles which had been left on them to conceal their galled backs from the sharp beaks of ravens and crows. These saddles, which are stuffed with straw and dry grass, he set on fire; this caused the terrified animals to shy, then to run away in mad fright, others following their example, and in a little while all the

[1] [Errata: Should be ad-Dmṛe. Cf. p. 712, ref. 6]

787 herds were rolling in a confused mass out of the desert towards the settled territory. The raiders, after losing a
●721 number of their own riding camels, *ǧejš*, had to retreat. Then at last did Hazzâ' comprehend the meaning of the dream sent to him by Allâh.

One of the Rwala chiefs during a raid had a *m'âwdi* dream. A bowl filled with rice was before him. Kneading a good-sized mouthful he put it in his mouth but had to spit it out quickly as it suddenly became intensely hot. He related his dream, *ḥazzâh*, to his companions, who said: "Success, success! We shall get booty, but it will be taken from us again; *nâḥod lena fowd w-jinfekk minna.*" And so it really happened. Attacking the herds of the Âl Zeben, a division of the Ṣḫûr tribe, they captured four and a half herds, *ḳaṭî'*. Greatly pleased with their exploit, they rode toward home with them but met on the road a stronger raiding troop of the Ḥwêṭât, allies of the Ṣḫûr, by whom they were surrounded, *sardowhom*, in a deep gully and defeated, losing not only all their booty but a good half of their own camels besides.

787 A Bedouin who dreams that he has his head or beard
302 shaved mourns, for this means that he will lose his dearest son or, at least, his mare and best camel.

513 While asleep the Rwejli is threatened with many dangers
774 from the spirit world, although it is Allâh only who makes sound sleep possible; for a man will not fall asleep until his heart is willing, which means when he has banished thoughts of his various cares; *mâ tnâm kowd ḳalbak nâjem*. When a Rwejli falls asleep, his soul, *nezem* or *rûḥ*, leaves his body through the nostrils, visits his relatives and the old camping grounds, goes out on raids, plays all sorts of incredible pranks, *'aǧâjeb*, eats and drinks, and the man will not awaken until his soul returns through the nostrils once more.

Yet the evil spirit also knows that the sleeper's soul roams about the world and so may make use of this opportunity to settle in the sleeping body. The Bedouin then wakes up as one possessed, *maǧnûn*.

628 A sleeping person, having no soul, according to the Rwala belief, is as good as dead and must therefore not be killed by an avenger; for spilt blood cannot be washed away by killing a sleeper, any more than it would be if one were to cut off the head of a dead murderer.

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

Verse 1. *Bejt* means the whole verse, *ḳâf* its second half and then, specifically, the rhyme of this second half. 3. *Śenâḥ* is a man of morose disposition, who will neither talk nor smile. 4. *'Elem* signifies a report circulating in regard to a man. If such a report is consistent it is considered unshakable. A good report must be that, otherwise a man would fall in the public esteem. 5. *Melwâḥ* is the decoy swung by a falconer when trying to lure a falcon towards him, *lawwaḥ 'ala-ṭ-ṭejr*. When a man breaks off a twig of the luxuriant *rṯe* and shows it to a riding camel, he coaxes her to come near, *lawwaḥ 'ala-d-delûl*. There are people whose actions lure evil into the tribe, regardless of the fact that their fellow tribesmen are already suffering. 7. *Menhaǧ* is a path or trail. 12. The women will reveal your secret plan, and you will then be unable to realize it. *Sadd* means, in particular, the planning of a great raid against a certain enemy. The men taking part in it do not themselves know accurately either the time of their departure or the enemy they are to attack. Should the commander's wife learn of it she would undoubtedly tell it to some of her friends, and the enemy would receive warning even before the raiders started. 18. When you have a good friend, share your last drop of water with him. Do not confound words with deeds. *Al-'ajn* means both a spring and an eye. *'Edd* is the name of a well with spring water which never dries up. 22. Violence, force, often leads to peace sooner than mildness. 23. *Ḥazz* signifies a passionate desire for something. Out of a youth filled with such a strenuous desire an exemplary being can be formed by a man of good sense. 25. *Nijje* is a plan, intention, desire, which robs a man of sleep, drives him to undertake night marches, and lights him on his way. 26. *Enṛaṛar* is said of a man who likes to eat well and to amuse himself with women. 28. The appeased man has not laid aside his saber; he has only dropped its point and could, if angered again, strike at him who had just appeased him.

1. *'Endi fetâṭi ṯil-faḥîm al-fâḥem*
   jarmi bḳulb al-ṛâfeḍin aḥḍa'
2. *al-'afen lew ta'ṭiḥ mâl ḥeḍat killeḥ*
   mâ jaḍkor faḍlak w-lâ jerodd ḍema'
3. *ḥelw elja' ǧâk ma'ṭâr ḥâǧe*
   w-'afen elja' laḳḳa-l-'amîl ḳafa'

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

serves for special journeys. 3. *Rbâ'* is a tent for men only. Nothing but coffee is made there. Other dishes are prepared by the women in another tent, where they also live. Among the 'Amârât and Dahâmše tribes every chief has two tents put up, one for men, the other for women. *Bimdâḫel* is pronounced *bimdâhel*. The Dahâmše often replace the *ḫ* with *h*. 4. Ğezzâ' eben Meğlâd, a relative of Hâjes, was the war leader, *šejḫ aš-šdâd*, of the Dahâmše. 5. *Membâh* is something which we learn through others. 6. *Naḫwa* is the war cry of a kin; a warrior *jentaḫi*, when he shouts his war cry before the chief or his comrades to prove that he will not desert them; an oppressed man *jenḫa'*, when he shouts the war cries of some prominent men, calling them to his aid. Whoever hears his own war cry uttered by an oppressed man feels ashamed and has to give help or else lose his reputation. 7. The traveling companions were his relatives, with whom he was riding to buy corn in as-Samâwa on the right bank of the lower Euphrates. 8. The poet associates with strangers, the Rwala. Even if they were fellow tribesmen, *beni al-'amm*, yet they would not protect him as would his *ahl*, his kin. 9. Fahad's father was Hâjes eben Meğlâd, universally recognized as the best judge, *'âreṣa*. 10. Mḥammad eben Turki, the chief of a powerful kin. 11. Ẓâri eben Ẓbej'ân, an influential chief of the Dahâmše. *Zebûn*, instead of *zeben*, shelter or protector. *Aṭ-ṭib* means a struggle, a contest or duel, with the stoutest hero of the enemy. 13. Maš'ân eben Bakr calls the camel herds belonging to his kin Ğaḥla, hence his war cry: "*Ana-ḫu ğaḥla eben bakr*, I am the brother of Ğaḥla, I am Eben Bakr!" *Radijje* is a common mare, *bdîše*. 14. *Flân meḍhabeh* (pl., *meḍâheb*) *ẓajjeł*, or *ṣidreh ẓajjeł*, is a narrow-breasted person, or one easily offended, who remains so for a long time; one who cannot exhale the anger from his breast. 16. Second cousins separated by two generations from their common ancestor, their great-grandfather, are included in the *ahl* proper or the kin bound to afford one another mutual protection.

CHAPTER XXI

WAR AND PEACE

721 619 181 The Rwala are ever at war with one tribe or another. Without war a Rwejli could not live. War gives him an opportunity of displaying his cunning, endurance, and courage. He neither loves the shedding of blood, nor craves booty, but is allured by danger and delights in the predatory art. The booty itself he will give away without thinking much about it — even to the wife of the very man he has just robbed. Some tribes, not always entire strangers, hate each other cordially. Between them peace is never of long duration. Despite the greatest efforts of the chiefs to prevent war, their people continue to attack and destroy one another. With the tribes settled along the desert borders and fully subject to the Government, peace is never concluded. If the Government, which is supposed to protect them, is weak, the Rwala despoil them whenever they are so inclined. The more distant the pastures of two tribes are, the longer will the war between them last.

DECLARATIONS OF WAR

721 The causes of war are, as a rule, petty thefts and the capturing of stray animals. The individual tribesmen begin to accuse each other of harboring stolen she-camels, *nahâjeṣ*. Then they call on their chiefs for help. Couriers ride from tribe to tribe with verbal and written messages. Evidently both tribes desire war. Finally the chief of one tribe sends to the chief of the other a letter worded somewhat as follows:

"To the well-born, highly honored brother, Chief So-and-So! May Allâh preserve his good name! Amen. Extending our greetings and entreating Allâh's mercy and blessing for you, we announce to you that your Arabs are harassing our people and robbing them of their property continually without any effort on your part to put a stop to it. From this we judge that it happens with your assent. We now demand that you return without delay the stolen camels. If you refuse, you are, behold! hereby deprived of your fair name, *mafrûd an-naḳa'*

2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

'alejkom, and our face shall remain blank to you. You must not accuse us and blacken our face. This much for you to know, and greetings. Your brother, X Y." 721

Should the other chief be averse to war, he will write back: "Both thine and my people rob each other mutually, *rab'i w-rab'ak ǧitamâ'urân bênkom*. If thou desirest war with us, *elja' tabri ḳudmetna*, return our fair name to us, *rudd 'alejna an-neḳa'*. We do not intend to fight with you and shall not return your integrity to you. Let us know whether ye are our friend, *ṣâḥbi* or *ṣâḥeb*, or enemy, *ḳowmâni*."

When in the early part of 1909 the Rwala began to harass the oasis of al-Ǧowf, which lies in their territory and for more than fifty years had belonged to the kin of Eben Rašîd, the minister of the Emir Sa'ûd eben Rašîd, still a minor, sent messengers to Prince an-Nûri eben Šaʿlân asking why his people were acting thus. An-Nûri's answer is worth noting:

"If Eben Rašîd is still as strong, *'azîz*, as before and can protect al-Ǧowf, I desire to live in friendship with him. But if his power is shattered and he is threatened with foreign sovereignty, then I shall not allow al-Ǧowf to fall into other hands. This is my land, and my land I will give to nobody. It has been reported to us that Eben Sa'ûd has defeated Eben Rašîd and is pursuing him in the direction of his seat, Ḥâjel. Go there and see for yourself what power your emir still has. If he prevails upon Eben Sa'ûd, we will come to a friendly agreement; but until that happens his representative had better depart, together with the garrison. If he does so at once, no Šammari shall suffer the least harm. Before tomorrow's sunset let me know when the garrison will leave. Should the answer not be in my hands by that time, behold! my face will remain white to you, you will be our enemies!"

Sometimes a chief will send word: "By God, let there be enmity between us, so that blood flows; *w-allâh w-el-ḥowm el-ḥamra*." Or: "Let there be between you and ourselves regularly declared enmity; *bêna w-bênkom ḥowm 'ala wajha-n-neḳa'*.

Neḳa' means honesty, a fair name. After peace is made the *neḳa'* remains with both tribes. Should one of these tribes attack the other, it would cover itself with infamy and stain, or blacken its face—meaning its honor or integrity. This status of integrity or of a good name must be first removed; this is done by the declaration of one tribe that it returns the

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

721 honesty, *raddejna an-neḳa' 'alejkom*, or wipes, or scrapes, i
off, *maǧrûd 'alejkom an-neḳa'*. As soon as this is done, the
may attack without injuring their honor in the least; *elje
raddejna an-neḳa' naṣir 'ala waẓha-n-neḳa'*. Their face wi
remain white. But when they attack without having first wipe
off the *neḳa'*, they commit treason and blacken their honor
*elja' mâ raddejna an-neḳa' hâḍa bowken baḳtûna jâ sûdân a
ḥejl*. The *neḳa'* is the beginning of the war, *râs al-ḳwâm
also the pillar of fighting, 'amûd al-ḥarâjeb*, and thus sig
nifies the declaration of hostilities.

721 The chief of any tribe may declare war. If several tribe
622 ally themselves under one prince, they do not thereby renounc
643 their right of declaring war independently. Prince an-Nûr
619 eben Šaʿlân is the recognized head of the Rwala, the Wel
'Ali, the Eššâǧeʿa, the Kwâčbe, and others, and yet he neve
declares war in the name of them all but merely of his ow
Rwala. During my stay there the Rwala lived at peace, *sâḥel*
with the Fedʿân, but this did not prevent the Weld 'Ali fro
making war, *ḳoum*, on the latter. When Prince an-Nûri de
clared war on Eben Rašîd the envoys of the Tûmân, a divisio
of the Šammar subject to Eben Rašîd, immediately appeare
before him, suing for peace. Only when the chiefs of all th
allied tribes give him the full power, *mawwanûh*, can he declar
war in their name, and war is also waged against all of them
ḳoum 'ala-l-ǧami'.

RAIDS

Small Raids

721 As soon as war has been declared raids, both large an
701 small, begin and often a regular battle, *maneh*, is also fought
If the hostile tribes camp somewhere near, a few men star
out for robbery on foot, *jihawšân*. If the camps are at some
distance, they ride on camels, *sa'âjir bizkûr ar-rikâb*. When
more than twenty men on camels, *ǧeja*, or on horses and
camels, *ḥejl u-ǧeja*, gather, then it is a raid, *razw*, called
ṣafir when the number of participants is small, and *čebîr*
when it is large. Every expedition of this kind has a leader
'âkid (pl., *'ukkâd*), who need not always be a chief of a tribe,
as every tribe can have its own military leader or war com-
mander, *ǧejš aš-šâkâd*, if the chief is not possessed of suffi-

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

cient military ability, or is ailing, or too old. Sometimes the chief's son or one of his relatives is entrusted with the command. But any Bedouin conspicuous for his prudence and bravery in time of war may be promoted from leader of the men on foot to leader of mounted men and may even be recognized as the commander-in-chief. The chief generally tries to gain his favor, marries his daughter to him, and adopts him into his kin, but likewise may bring about his death on finding that the commander does not wish him well. For a leader who rises in such a manner usually deposes the reigning kin and becomes chief himself. Therefore the members of the reigning kin are very careful when choosing a chief and recognize only the most distinguished of their kin. This is also the reason why the dignity of a chief does not pass from father to son as a matter of course.

The commander of the smaller expeditions gives notice to his friends: "We intend to start on foot — or on horseback — on a raid, *nabṛi nchauśel* or *nc'ajjer*." When some men have declared their willingness to participate, he says to them:

"We shall go when the sign is favorable, *aimedd bel-sraǧbet az-zêne*, either on Monday or Thursday."

For the small expeditions dark nights are the most suitable, *lejâl az-zulma' zêne lil-ma'âjir w-al-ḥauśel*. But by far the best is the *lejlet as-sarra*, the last night of the lunar month, when the moon does not appear at all, "as he is then staying with the sun." On clear nights *lejâl al-ḥamra*, small expeditions are never undertaken. Among the seasons of the year the cold period is the most favorable, as there is not so much danger from thirst, which is greatly feared. On the whole, both small and large expeditions are made preferably in the time of abundance, *rubi'*, when edible plants, good pasture, and plenty of water may be found anywhere. This is the time when the inner desert swarms with raiders of every description.

Preparations for a Large Raid

Whenever the commander intends to undertake a large raid, *jimedd razzâj*, he announces it to the chiefs in substantially these words: "Behold! we wish to go on a large raid under the leadership of the All-Highest. Shoe your horses and prepare supplies for yourselves, *chdû ḥejlkom w-arazzeuâ zehâbkom*. Behold! ye will assemble at the appointed place on

●721 Monday [or Thursday] which is always favorable to us, *bu bet aṣ-ṣnên.*"

They answer: "O Allâh, may success be our lot! May grant us luck! *Jâ-llâh maksûm ḫejr allâh ja'ṭi aa-sa'nd.*"

705 492 Then they begin to hunt for good camel bags, flour, w bags, and barley for the horses. He who means to go on mare only seeks someone to carry his food supplies. *zam* If he finds a camel rider who will do him that service, *maleh*, he loads his supplies on the camel and himself r in the saddle, while the owner sits behind. The mare r beside the camel to which she is tied. But every owner mare generally has a camel of his own and is accompa either by his slave or a younger relative. Those who ride camels are always in the majority, and for long raids in hot season none but she-camels are used. Horses are rid mainly on short raids, undertaken in the time of *rabi'*. can all the horses in camp be taken out—at least half m be left at home in order to repel a possible hostile att All the horses are shod before making a raid, and a extra horseshoes taken to meet emergencies, *jetanaṣṣel ḫ ha*. They also sew up, generally with horsehair, the vagi *jeǧubberûn al-faras*, of mares big with young, especially older ones, in order to prevent miscarriage.

721 701 Old men and small boys must not go on a raid. T are left at home to guard the camp. However, a boy of tw is old enough to join the raiders and may properly do especially in the *rubî'* season when neither thirst nor hun threatens. In the hot months mainly men between 16 and [585 777] take part. They do not like to be accompanied by a young h band, *'arrîs* (sic), in the first year of his married life. This ti called *ḫrûn al-'ars*, is not very favorable to important ventu therefore it is better that the young husband should stay [834] home. No custom forbids men to have intercourse with th [714] wives immediately before starting out, nor is it necess that they should put on freshly washed clothes. Everyb usually leaves in the clothes he wears at the moment.

721 The preparations for a raid take a considerable ti However, nobody ever knows definitely against which t he is going, for the simple reason that the Rwala alw have several enemies at once. Only the most intimate frie of the commander-in-chief know his objective, while the m of the camp is kept guessing. This secret it is necessary

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preserve, as some wayfarer or foreign herdsman might easily give warning to the hostile tribe and enable it to lay a trap for the raiders. It is generally the slaves of the prince or commander who overhear the conversation and then relate it to show that they know more than the Rwala themselves.

On the day agreed on they depart in smaller or larger groups either for the commander's tent or the appointed place of rendezvous. A guide familiar with the watering places, *delîl*, is always taken and, whenever possible, a member of the tribe to be attacked as well. This is usually an elderly herdsman who has hired himself out with them; he is sent for by the commander at the last moment before setting out.

The commander is also accompanied on the raid by a seer or sorcerer, *şâḥeb as-sirr*, to whom Allâh sends dreams in his sleep of a certain significance, *'arṣa ma'âwdîjje*. He is asked by the commander: "O So-and-So, didst thou have a dream of such-and-such a significance? *'arṣatk ğatk*." It is a favorable omen, for instance, if he has dreamed of a mare or a she-camel; if he has kissed a girl, put on a new dress, or eaten dates—all these presage a rich capture of camels. If he has eaten meat in his dream, it means that tents will be captured, together with the kettles in which the meat is boiled. If he has put on a greenish jacket in his dream, *ğowba ḫaḍra*, the commander will distinguish himself in a duel. If he dreamt that he was standing on a high hill, it is a sure sign that the commander will defeat the enemy decisively. If he has seen regular soldiers attacking the Bedouins, it is a sure sign that a heavy rain will compel the raiders to rest for some time. Of unfavorable significance, *'arṣa šêna*, is a dream in which the sleeping seer sees a wounded, a naked, or a snake-bitten man; or one in which he has his front teeth knocked out; or in which he falls down a well, *wâle'en bel-ḥelîb*, or is fettered, or holds gold in his hand, or goes blind. But if he puts on a red jacket in his dream, then the commander's blood is sure to flow.

The commander takes care not to meet before his tent any member of the 'Orḍân (Misfortunates) kin of the Kwâčbe, of the Flete (Surprised) of the Rwala, of the Bdûr (Oppressed) of the Eššâğe'a, or of the Kšûš (Chased Away) of the 'Abdelle, for the names of these kins prove that they possess qualities very unfavorable to any large undertaking, *'arṣathom mâ ḥi zên*.

When the commander reaches the place of meeting, the

701 partakers in the raid greet him with the words: "May this
721 project bring luck, *rāšda han-nijje*," his answer being: "The same to thee, *lewowlak*."

In every raid there is a commander or leader. In the smaller ones there is only one, in the larger there may be more. In the smaller raids the leader, *'ażid*, takes the best of the captured riding camels, *nâḳt aš-šdâd*, as well as a she-camel which strikes his fancy, *al-mhawwa'*, and finally a she-
[782] camel for sacrifice, *al-'ażire*, because according to the custom one she-camel is sacrificed after each successful raid.

If the raiding party is made up of various tribes or clans, each of them has its own wholly independent leader. Only when the commander-in-chief also participates will he command in person and thus become *al-muniḫ al-muṭir*, that is to say, the one who gives orders when to rest and when to march. To *al-muniḫ al-muṭir* one she-camel, *ṣadrijje*, is given by each of the leaders, and besides he gets all the pack camels captured in the raid, such animals being recognized by their bald or gray backs, *ašhab aẓ-ẓahr*. Moreover he can pick out any she-camel he desires, *ḥazizateh* (sic), and the best riding camel, and the camel for sacrifice. As a leader of his own troop he shares equally with the other leaders except when nothing but pack animals, he-camels, *zeml*, and she-camels, *roḥl*, have been captured in the raid. In that case the leader takes as many as he wants, the rest going to the men under his command.

701 The commander also decides whether the booty is to be
727 divided, *ḫiśer*, or whether every one has to seize it on his
425 own account, *ṛejr ḫiśer*. In picking out a riding camel after a raid in which every man has taken booty for himself, the *'ażid* permits its owner to take any other he pleases in exchange, but has the right to except three participants from whom nothing may be taken. Such a permission is given with these words: "I empower thee to select from all raiders excepting from these three, A, B, and C. To them do not go, but otherwise take what thou desirest. *Ana mheddak behalṛarw 'okob ṣalâṭe flân wa-flân wa-flân lâ tiǧihom ḫoǧ illi tarṭik*." The she-camel he thus takes is called *ṛafwa*. If stray horses, *mdreǧ*, or abandoned camels are caught or dropped rifles found, both these being called *hdreǧ*, they are handed over to the commander, who is entitled to them. For the rest, captured horses always belong to the captor, are never shared,

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701 727 425 and cannot be claimed by the commander. If a horse owner who has formed a partnership with a camel owner captures only one she-camel, he keeps her, giving his partner six *meǧidijjāt* ($5.40) in compensation. If he captures a horse, he gives his comrade a she-camel from his own herd; otherwise the first captured she-camel is always his, while the second, *ʿāǧde*, belongs to the partner. But when everybody takes booty on his own account he must mark the captured she-camel in such a way that she may not be taken by someone else. Usually he makes her kneel and fetters both her forelegs to prevent her from running away. A she-camel about which two raiders are in dispute is called *rubāǧa*.

If the commanders of a raid agree to share the booty obtained by all, *jetaǧāšarūn*, they begin by counting the participants. If one of the leaders has many and another only a few men with him, the latter is given more, so as to equalize the strength of all the troops. The booty is divided equally into as many parts as there are leaders; these take their share and apportion the rest among their men. Demanding a head rope from each man, the leader lays these ropes over his left arm and, walking among the captured animals, hangs one rope after another around their necks. Every one then takes the she-camel with his head rope. The remaining animals are divided in the same manner. Should there be more participants than captured camels, the *ʿāžid* divides them arbitrarily. As a rule he takes into consideration how much booty has been taken by the men individually or the fact that some of the men may have lost camels of their own. The manner of getting booty and of its division should always be agreed on before the raid, to prevent trouble afterwards.

721 When all the men taking part in a raid assemble, the leader informs them whither they are bound. After midnight two or three men on horseback are ordered to ride ahead in order to examine the country through which the expedition has to pass as far as their next night's rest. They are called [825] *ʿāǧa* (pl., *ʿuǧūn*). As far as possible they should have white horses, because white means success. Their duty is to find the tracks of Bedouins, to look from hilltops for camps, grazing camels, and troops of riders, and to examine the neighborhood of the next night's stopping place with regard to water and pasture, etc. If they sight a troop of riders or if they find neither water nor sufficient pasture near the spot

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●721 designed for their night's rest, they send one of their number to the commander with the report of what they have found, while the others keep an eye on the strange riders or continue their search for a better place to sleep in the direction given to them by the leader.

In the morning the leader announces to his troop: "Our supper will be in such and such a place." Each man saddles his animal. Then he looks fixedly at the leader. As soon as the latter jumps into his saddle, all follow his example and ride after him.

Raiders' Marching Songs

539x On the road, especially in the morning, the Rwala exercise their horses or let them prance at will, and amuse themselves with songs known as *ḥda'*.

Jâ-llâh ṭalabnâk jâ-l-ṛafûr
jâ-ba-d-daráǧ al-'âlije
teǧ'al lena ḥazzen jeṭûr
bel-awwala w-at-tâlije.

O Allâh! we beg of thee, thou forgiver,
O Lord of the stairs which lead up to the heights!
To let our luck uplift itself
With the first she-camel and the last one too.

Jeṭûr means a kneeling camel in the act of rising from the ground.

Fâlakom jâ ṛazw ṭib
fâlakom ṭaršen 'azib
fâlakom já ṛazw ṭajjeb
fâlakom ṭaršen ḳrajjeb.

May your omen, O *ṛazw* (raid)! be good;
May it signify herds spending the night far from tents.
May your omen, O *ṛazw*! be good;
May it signify herds close by.

[787] *Fâl* is a sign, omen, from which either the success or the failure of the undertaking is judged. *Ṭaršen 'azib* is a herd grazing and sleeping far from the tents, which are usually pitched near a watering place.

639x

Já mâ ḫala ṭâri-l-ḫarâjeb
w-aš-šejḫ jowîed nârəha
min fowḳ mušammart aš-šelîl
w-mu'asbaran mismâraha.

Oh, how dear are the tidings of wars,
When their fire is stirred by the chief
Riding on a mare with her tail held upright
And with the nails of her shoes inward bent.

Ṭâri-l-ḫarâjeb, the report or tidings of wars, has the same meaning as *ḫaber al-ḫarâjeb*. *Šelîl* signifies a tail and the hairs of the tail. A good mare holds her tail upright, *mušammart aš-šelîl*, while galloping, so that her hips are covered by the hair of the tail.

Ḥaribina miṯl al-'alîl
w-elja' beri 'âdeḥ belâh
'âdâtana ḏabḥ al-ḫalîl
w-aṭ-ṭâmeḥ nelḥečha ḫawâh.

He who wars with us is like a sick man
Whom, scarce recovered, his disease overtakes once more.
We are wont to kill a husband,
Enabling a woman who sighs for a braver man to choose whom she desires.

He who is at war with the Rwala is never safe from an attack. Even if a whole month or two go by without their making their appearance, he must not imagine that they will come no more and that he is wholly safe and well. They might be twenty days away, for example when camping in northern Palmyrena and their enemies in the valley of ar-Rma' or in the neighborhood of Ḫajbar, yet they will come suddenly, and thus his disease — meaning defeat and the loss of herds — will return. In fighting them, many a husband will die whose wife was longing for a better, braver man. If her husband refuses to divorce her and her kin will not allow her to leave him, she can only wait till the enemy's arms rid her of him. Thus the Rwala offer her, as a medicine, *nelḥečha*, the free choice of a better husband.

[721]

Al-bâreḥa ḫulli žerîb
w-al-jowm bass dijârahom
da' bâlak ar-riḏm aṭ-ṭwîl
ṛadîk taṭle' nârahom.

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right hand he holds his staff or a rifle, to which he ties his kerchief for a flag, and points it in the direction of the threatening danger. *Ḥṣân* always means a stallion, *faras* a mare, *ḫejl* horses in general. The *ḥṣân* is, as a rule, more enduring than the mare. *Al-ḥṣân ḥalad* means "the stallion became tired," implying that he stopped moving owing to oversweating or because he was so weakened by heat and thirst that he could not escape from the enemy hard in pursuit of him. *Zabeṇ*, he protected, took his part. He that is threatened with death or is in fear of an avenger asks the protection of one more powerful, who will then shield and bring him to a place where he can live in peace, *zabaneḳ*.

Já 'ejâl dukkû-l-barûd
lel-moṛṛebi muḫḫ al-ḥadîd
lâ budd min jowmen ja'ûd
jafroḳ wadîden 'an wadîd.

My sons, pound the powder;
For al-Moṛṛebi we need steel,
And the day is sure to come
Which will take the lover
from his sweetheart.

A Turkish officer, known to the Rwala only by the name of al-Moṛṛebi, was in command of the regular troops who drove back the Bedouins whenever they tried to encamp in the settled territory. This happened in the seventies of the last century, when it was the policy of the Turkish Government to protect the *felâḥîn* from the Bedouins. The Rwala, who had lost many men, thirsted for revenge and as they could go neither to Syria nor to Irak they manufactured their powder themselves. *Muḫḫ al-ḥadîd* is steel. They wished to shoot al-Moṛṛebi with a steel bullet, thinking that an ordinary one of lead would not kill him.

Narmi-l-'aṣa benḥûrhen laṭ-ṭejr
w-en kankabb al-adnas wara'
bemlenṣelâten ṣan'ahen bed-dejr
berḥab 'adlât al-ǧeṣa'.

Before the throats [of the she-camels] we shall throw
their supper to the birds of prey,
Though the base one still lingers behind;
With spears adorned with chains made at ad-Dejr
[Driven] into the necks of mares fed from the new crop.

Benḥûrhen means the confusion of galloping camels and also their throats. Our riders are loath to retreat; they want

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539* army, attempted to block their way. Refusing to let them pass, he was defeated and killed. This affair took place south of Kerbela, at the end of the escarpment Ṭâr as-Sejhed.

Já ṭârsîen leben ḥaḍḍâl
jiżbel 'ala-l-ma' w-ar-rabî'
bên al-obejjeẓ w-al-ṛadaf
bezhejleten naṙab ǧamî'.

Thou who goest to Eben Ḥaḍḍâl, [ask him]
To approach the abundance and water.
Between al-Obejjeẓ and al-Ṛadaf
On the plain there we shall play together.

The Rwala invited Eben Ḥaḍḍâl, the head chief of the 'Amârât, to come to the inner desert, *jeṣarreṣ*, and there to meet them between the valleys of al-Obejjeẓ and al-Ṛadaf, both of which belong to the 'Amârât and where the herds of the Rwala were grazing at that time. This region was full of water, annuals, and perennials; and hence abundance, *rabî'*, reigned there.

Approaching the Enemy

● 721 If no report comes in from the *'ujûn*, the commander rides without stopping to the night quarters where the *'ujûn* always wait for him. But should the commander see a troop of riders who on coming closer are found to be enemies, there ensues a fight the result of which decides whether the raiders shall return or go on with their venture. If the *'ujûn* find a better place for the night's rest, the leader accepts it. There they water and feed the horses, let the camels graze, and prepare supper for themselves. As a rule five or six men club together for that purpose. The different groups invite each other with the words: "We invite you, O brothers of ours! let him who comes reach out for the luck, and may he fare well who remains seated! *al-ḫwa jâ ḫwijâna eflaḥ min ǧâ' w'erŝed min ḳa'ad.*"

The invited answer: "May booty be our food and another such supper, and also may we be not too long absent from our kin! *ḫwa min ṛana' w-ṭana' w-ǧâ' ḥaleḥ mâ twanna.*" All are eager for booty and an early, happy return to their families in order soon to make a new raid and again to invite their brothers to a supper like the last.

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After midnight the leader sends out the scouts, *'ujún*, once more and repeats this till he comes near the camps and herds of the tribe he wishes to attack.

When the *'ujún* report that the enemy is close by, at a command from the leader six or eight men mount three or four camels and go to examine the situation. These are called *subr* (pl., *sbúr*). Concealing their camels in a gully, they find out in the daytime how many camps there are in the neighborhood and where the camels are grazing; at night they try to count the tents and horses in the camp. If they succeed in capturing one of the enemy, they bring him to the leader, who makes him tell, by kindness or, if necessary, by threats, all he wants to know. Otherwise he must depend merely on the report *'elem*, brought by the *subr*.

Having learned the strength of the enemy and the location of their pastures, the leader examines the camels of his own party. The exhausted or slow animals are separated from the hardy and fast ones. The former (called *redd*) are then laden with all the baggage of the raiders and sent back to the previous night's quarters where they are to wait. The rest of the camels are then mounted each by two men armed with rifles. They are called *ṣébár*. Each horse is mounted by a man carrying a revolver or pistol and, when possible, a spear. The leader rides on horseback in front. Near the camp they conceal themselves. The cavalry prepare for the attack, *ṛára*, while those on camels wait quietly for whatever may happen.

The Attack and Counter Attack

The attack is timed either for sunrise, *ṣabbaḥadhom ṣabbáḥ*, when the left forelegs of the resting camels are being unfettered, or for the *ṣuḥa*, i. e. when the herds start for the pasture. *Eḫṭáfa* is an attack made in the middle of the afternoon; *sudíma*, an evening attack, when the herds are still scattered over the pastures; an attack on the herds returning from the pasture is called *ṛára ṭa'labijje*; when they have already returned to the camp, but are still unfettered, an attack known as *ṛára dakka* is made. All these attacks are considered honorable, because the attacked party has time for defense. In daytime they can see and hear; after sunset, not being yet asleep, they can hear; after midnight, however, and especially when the morning star appears, they are sound

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721 asleep. Both men and dogs sleep under cover in order to protect themselves against the dew and chill. An attack launched at this time is called *bejât* and is dishonorable, as the surprised enemy cannot defend himself.

726 The order to attack is given by the leader with the words: "Gain success, O ye looters! *eflehû jâ ṣânimîn*," and by a gesture of his hand to the cavalry to advance. For their part they shout: "O Allâh, by Allâh himself!" or: "O Allâh, thy will be done! *jâ-llâh 'alα bâbak*," and throw themselves on the herds without paying attention to the herdsmen. Every one tries to reach an animal with his spear, calling at the same time on his comrades to witness that it was he who captured it; he then drives it before him to a second and third, which he also makes his own. A long spear is very useful in this kind of work. Sometimes they succeed in surrounding and capturing all the herds, but usually some of the camels shy and gallop away madly. These animals can never be overtaken by the attackers unless they run towards their last quarters, for frightened camels will not stop until quite exhausted.

704 The captured herds are driven by the cavalry to the
725 leader, who waits for them with the camel riders. There the cavalry divides. One half, armed with spears, drives the booty to the last quarters, the other, armed with revolvers, pistols, and rifles conceals itself in some suitable spot between the leader and the camp of the enemy. These hidden warriors are called *ḍemîn*, the reserve.

Both the reserve and the leader with the camel riders, *ṣâbûr*, wait for the counter attack, *far'a*, which the enemy usually makes in order to rescue the captured animals and to drive the raiders back. The task of the camel riders, *ṣâbûr*, consists in opposing the sortie, and in this they are supported by the reserve in their rear. If the sortie is beaten back and the enemy dispersed, the *ṣâbûr* fall on the camp, taking all the tents there with everything in them.

721 However, it is only on rare occasions that the enemy
704 can be taken wholly by surprise, because the chief of every
726 camp follows the rule of sending out riders on camels, called *fullâ'*, to observe the country on all sides. They usually start before sunrise, ascend the highest hillocks, survey the neighborhood in all directions, and do not return till after sunset.

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Should the pastures be more than twenty kilometers from the camp, the herds are accompanied by a troop of cavalry, *fasab*, who stay with them all day and also return only after sunset. Besides this, on all the highest elevations at different points around the pastures and between them and the camp, sentinels lie hidden behind piles of stones. These keep a sharp outlook for anything suspicious that may appear on the horizon. If something unusual is noticed by one of the mounted pickets, *fullū'*, he ties his kerchief to the muzzle of his rifle, waves it in the direction of whatever has aroused his suspicion, and shouts at the top of his voice:

"At their backs, O riders, an attack threatens you! *ẓhaw-rahen* [sic] *jā-hla-l-ḫejl 'alejkom ṛāra.*"

This shout is repeated and the direction indicated by the next sentinel, so that the whole camp is put on its guard in a few minutes. The girls and women hasten to open the iron fetters on the mares' forelegs, while the men put on cartridge belts and seize their rifles. One rider after another speeds in the direction from which the danger is expected, singing *ḥda'* ditties on the way. Those who own no mare wait, weapons in hand, for the next report. If the alarm cry, *ṣijāḥ*, proves false and thus that the man who gave it, *ṣājeḥ*, called for help, *fazza' al-'arab*, unnecessarily, the sentinel shouts: "Forgiveness, *al-'āfje*," and the cavalry who came out return home in groups, singing. But if the enemy really appears and is near at hand, the warriors who have no horses run from the camp afoot to help the cavalry. In case the enemy flees and the cavalry cannot overtake them, they return to the camp, pick their riding camels from among the herds, saddle them, load them with water bags and food, and start as the *ṣalab* in pursuit of the hostile troop.

Should the rescuing cavalry who make the counter attack, *fza'a*, find out that the attackers are too numerous, they dispatch messengers to the neighboring camps, who shout from afar: "Come out to our help quickly! Your comrades have been robbed! *efza'ū rab'akom. wuḫegū.*" As this cry is repeated by the sentinels of the other camps or by the herdsmen, it is often unnecessary for the messenger to reach the camp itself. He stops and waits for the first riders to respond to his call, and with them he then gallops to assist his people.

If, for instance, Eben Ša'lân is informed that a strong

721 704 726 enemy is approaching, he orders all his tribal divisions to get ready. Soon troop after troop headed by their chiefs arrive at his camp, defile before his tent, *je'arḍûn*, and shout their battle cry:

"Before thine eyes, *'ajnâk*, O chief! The rider protecting the 'Alja camel herds rides before thine eyes, and that rider is a Rwejli, *'ajnâk ḫajjâl al-'alja rwejli.*"

703 726 The battle cry, *naḫâwa*, uttered before the chief is intended to rouse both his courage and that of his warriors, *ještiddûn maḥzam aš-šejḫ w-jukawwûn* (sic) *'azmakom*. As a proof that they will not desert their fellow tribesman they defile before him on horseback; this is called *'arḍa*. The *'arḍa* is always connected with the *naḫâwa*. Without a *naḫâwa* there is no *'arḍa*.

Whenever Eben Ša'lân sets out to rescue his captured herds, he shouts to the enemy from afar:

"Oh, how many times have we freed herds like these from enemies like you. The rider protecting the 'Alja herds is a Rwejli! By Allâh himself! This day is the most ruinous of all days for you. Oh, how far are your kinsfolk from you! *Já má fakkejna miṭlehen min miṭlekom ḫajjâl al-'alja rwejli w-allâh ḫal-jowm akrad al-ajjâm 'alejkom w-ba'ad ahalkom al-jowm 'alejkom.* All of you must perish, your kins will not come to help you!"

If the victorious attackers expect a second counter attack, *faz'a*, stronger in numbers, before hiding themselves their cavalry defile before the commander and the camel riders and shout their battle cry:

"Before thine eyesight, O chief! Before your eyes, O comrades! The rider protecting the 'Alja is a Rwejli!"

The commander answers: "We shall not desert each other! *lâ ḫala' w-lâ 'adaw*," and is the first to throw himself on the enemy, with the words:

"If Allâh grants luck to us we shall capture your mares as we have already taken your camels!" for nothing inspires the troop so much as the bravery of its leader. On the other hand, if he betrays hesitation, all is lost. If the leader on his part notices that his men are wavering, he admonishes them with the battle cry:

"Before your eyes, O comrades! The rider protecting 'Alja is I, So-and-So. I fill even heroes with fear, I, So-and-So, *ḍa"âr as-sebûja w-ana flân eben flân.*" If they answer: "Enough

 539x

Jâ ḍrajjem laḳa'fat 'alejk
ḫoſemt w-'aḳabk al-feláḥ
min 'oḳob mâ rišak čefir
w-al-jowm mak,ûm al-ǧenâḥ.

O Ḍrajjem! faith, it was measured to thee with the same measure.
A rap on the nose thou hast got, and thy success is gone.
Though many feathers thou hast inherited,
Yet today thy wings are broken for ever.

Fuḳḳ al-ǧelam 'ajja jeṣûl
wa' direti ṛadaw baka
eḍraw lmaḍrat 'ali zebûn
ḫalawk jalbes ṭawbaka.

He opened his shears, refused to attack.
Ah, they occupied my territory!
They purchased a caftan for 'Ali's wife
And made him wear her dress.

Owing to the lack of good rain, there was no pasture in the Rwala territory at one time and consequently no affluence, *dîrt ar-rwala maḥal mâ baka rabî'*, but in the regions inhabited by their enemies, the tribe of Sba'a, the vegetation was luxuriant, *rîf*. So they agreed among themselves, *tawâzaw*, to move into the Sba'a territory, *dîra*, and said: 721● 619

"We shall go there and encamp near our relatives, the 'Aneze; *ehna ntawaǧǧeh ila had-dîra wa-nzel ḫawâli ʒeribna 'aneza* (sic). If they accept our friendship we shall become their friends and conclude peace with them, *elja ḫbalaw ṣuḥebna ṣâḥebnâhom wa-tṣâlḥna ma'hom*; if they refuse we will fight them, *w-elja' mâ ḫbalaw aṣ-ṣulḥ nilla nḥârebhom*. Either they will take us or we shall take them, drive them out and use the pastures in their territory, and thus save our herds and our own lives; *amma jâḥedîna w-amma nâḥedhom wa-nhaǧǧeǧhom w-nar'a al-mar'a alli bdîrthom wa-nakkem ḫaldîna wa-n'îš."*

Remaining steadfast in this resolve, *ṛapabaw 'ala harṛ'j*, they marched into the Sba'a territory and soon reached the settlement of al-Midân, which belongs politically to the administrative district of Homs, *tabi' homs*. There the Sba'a and Fed'ân tribes were already encamped and ready to fight. The Rwala, halting not far from them, at once formed a war 721 726

721 726 camp, *tenâwaḫaw menâḫ*. All camel herds were driven into one line, and each animal was made to kneel and was fettered. The women and children sat down by their herds, while the men, posting themselves between them and the enemy, waited for the attack. This situation lasted for four days. On the fifth day, when a few young camels had already died of hunger, the Rwala assailed the Sba'a and Fed'ân with such fury that they drove them out from their tents in flight, *'oddawhom ila wara-l-bujût*. Some succeeded in loosening the fetters of their camels and in fleeing with them, *minhom min ḳadar jeṭallek ba'arineh w-inhazam bai 'ala-l-ḫala*, but others were surprised in this act and captured, *w-minhom min a'ğelûh ar-rağâl 'an taṭlîz ḥalâleh w-hâlaw 'alejh ar-rwala*. The Rwala took all the tents with the sheep which they found near them, also many horses and camels, and continued to pasture their animals in that territory undisturbed until the Sba'a finally made peace with them. The Sba'a asked 'Ali al-Fḳiḳi, chief of the 'Ebede division, to join them in assailing the Rwala in order to eject the latter from their territory, but 'Ali refused. Then they sang the preceding ditty about him.

639[1] *Fakk*, he opened, is an insulting allusion to Fḳiḳi. 'Ali often called himself *al-ğelam*, shears, meaning that he would cut up any hostile raid. *Zebûn* is a garment with narrow sleeves, open in front along its whole length and reaching down to the ankles. It is worn by men over the shirt. *Ṯoub* is a woman's shirt of blue fabric.

Já mḥammad já bedîn aṣ-ṣejf
râ'i-l-wa'îde ğâ' lehu
slimân 'ammar leh sebîl
min ḫufratak wa-dlâlaha.

O Mḥammad! O thou who hast sated thyself with the guest
Who came to the meeting agreed on!
Slimân has surely well filled his short pipe
At thy fire and did drink from thy coffeepots.

539[2] 721 726 Muḥammad eben Smejr sent word to his enemy Slimân eben Merîed, the head chief of the Ḳmuṣa division of the Sba'a tribe, to come for a smoke to his tent. Slimân answered that Muḥammad should not expect such a guest with much pleasure. Shortly afterwards Slimân attacked Muḥammad's camp, scattered his warriors, took all his tents with their supplies, smoked Muḥammad's pipe, and drank coffee from his

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pota. *Ḥufra* is the pit in which fire is made in the men's compartment of the tent.

Slimân law taḳ'od we-tâf
al-'arfa weš ǧara laha
bên as-swejda w-al-'ala
ḥalǧen tadûr 'ejâlaha.

Slimân, if thou wouldst only sit down and look [thou wouldst see]
By the 'Arfa herds what has happened to them,
How between as-Swejda and al-'Ala
The she-camels now seek their young.

Slimân eben Merîed, the chief of the Ḳmuṣa, who call all camel herds "al-'Arfa," made a raid against the Rwala but was defeated and pursued as far as the inner desert. Then, before he could return home, Eben Ša'lân attacked his camp between as-Swejda and al-'Ala and captured many of his herds. The riding camels of Eben Merîed's troop after returning to camp sought for their weaned calves in vain, for the Rwala had driven them away.

Al-meširefe tarṭan raṭin
taǧâwabat hi w-al-'ala
eben ša'lân aḫâl surûǧ
zoudeu 'ala ḥoms w-ḥama'

Al-Meširefe all the time is jabbering,
Talk'ng with al-'Ala
How Eben Ša'lân loaded corn at Surûǧ
More than he would find in Ḥoms and Ḥama'.

Surûǧ is a settlement between as-Swejda and al-'Ala, inhabited by *fellâḥin* who cultivate the fields of Eben Merîed's house. Al-Meširefe is peopled by Circassians, who also own some settlements in al-'Ala. Their language is not understood by the Rwala, hence the phrase: "She [al-Meširefe] is jabbering, *tarṭan raṭin*." After defeating the Ḳmuṣa and plundering Eben Merîed's camp, the victorious Rwala took all the corn stored at Surûǧ.

Jâ lâbeli tawen ḫirebt al-kejf
w-al-ḫalîl ǧulejm ṣâḥh
min 'aǧǧeten ṣârat 'alejhom
bên as-swejda w-al-'ala'.

727 A sister cries three times: "Alas, woe is me! alas, thou
746 brother of mine!"

A daughter: "Alas, woe is me, alas, thou father of mine!"

Then they sit down, cry till their eyes are dry, and return quietly to their tents. There is no other mourning.

LARGE BATTLES, OR *MANÁḤ*

721 The fight called *manáḥ*, as distinguished from the *razw*
726 or raid for booty, is very different. When a stronger tribe wants to possess itself of the territory of a weaker or to increase its fame, *zoud al-i'tibár*, it moves with all its herds and tents into the territory occupied by the latter, *nál 'alejh soucla*, and finally encamps near the main camp of the enemy. The tents form as a rule two long rows, which behind the herds graze; in front of them, within rifle shot, stands the tent of the leader and a few others belonging to his retinue. In these few tents there is nothing except the utensils for making black coffee, meals being prepared in the tents behind. All the mares stand saddled by these war tents, *bujút al-ḥarb*, while the riding camels lie fettered between the other tents. The men on foot are posted right and left of the war tents. Before the attack, the men on foot sometimes hide by the war tents.
721 The cavalry attempts to drive the enemy to them and within
726 rifle shot. Before the attack the tribal emblem Abu-d-Dhûr is
703 fastened to a camel which walks in the midst of the bravest youths on horseback. These warriors are accompanied by the prettiest women and girls of the camp, who, with their bosoms bared and hair loosened, keep shouting:

"He who runs away today shall never receive anything from us; *illi jeḥred al-jowm má leh 'endana ḥakk*." Their inspiring high-pitched cries, *zaṛárit*, are heard for a great distance. In order to raise the courage and steadiness of his warriors the chief orders the 'Aṭfa, a fancy litter, to be placed on a she-camel and the handsomest of the girls to take her place in it. Throwing off her kerchief the maiden loosens her hair, unfastens the string holding together the dress under the throat, and seats herself in the litter. Her female companions, like her, mount she-camels and shouting *zaṛárit* hasten to join the melée in order to encourage their relatives and friends. If it is impossible to withstand the superior strength of the enemy, they call out to the girl on the 'Aṭfa to conceal

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herself, as the capture of the 'Aṭfa by the enemy would mean the greatest disgrace for both the reigning kin and the whole tribe. Thereupon the girl on the 'Aṭfa drives her animal to her father's tent, makes it kneel here, and either jumps off, unbuckles the litter, and pulls it inside the tent, or flees with it from the camp.

When the tribe is attacked while migrating and the women driving the camels laden with all their household goods fear that the enemy may rob them — the men, meanwhile, being engaged in repelling the attackers — they beg every passing rider to defend them, and the girls, especially, at the top of their voices, call out the names of their sweethearts:

"Bring me So-and-So, ye men! Call So-and-So hither, ye who like to amuse yourselves with girls! I want So-and-So, him of whom all talk!"

If a man passes by whom the woman expects to help her, she cries: "Thou wert praised to me so highly, and yet I have not seen thee do anything today."

When a lover reaches the woman of his heart, she breaks into an inspiring shout, uttering in a high-pitched tremulous voice the syllables of the word *zarārīt*. The lover greets her: "Oh, how I rejoice before thine eyes! *jā mā 'ajnēč wa-frāḥi*," or: "To thy joy, O So-and-So! *farḥateč jā flāne*."

Ditties Sung by Defenders of Their Camps

While speeding through the camp or the moving throng in order to repel a hostile attack the men sing short ditties.

Já rabb naflobak al-huda'
w-as-sitr w-al-'elm al-maliḥ
rab'i medâbis al-'uda'
w-en ḥarrafaw 'enda-ṭ-tariḥ.

O Lord! we beg thee for a lucky guidance,
For protection and good news!
My comrades, cudgels for the enemy,
Will not turn their mares save when a rider is thrown from his saddle.

They pray to Allâh for lucky leadership and favorable news about the position of the main force of the enemy, that they may attack at once and thus avoid being taken on the

539 For the eyes of her who draws apart the tent wall and peeps out
Thirsting and longing for one of our glances,
Our custom is to rescue the captured herds,
And our task is to bring in mares whose riders we have hurled down.

[727] When, after repelling the attack, the warriors return with their booty to their tents, they are inspected by the women and girls from the tents. Being themselves invisible, the latter look through the small space between the tent wall and roof. This wall or tent side is called *eḍ-ḍera*. "*Derrûna 'as ha-l-bard*, hang up the wall to protect us from the cold." *Awâḳ* means to examine something thoroughly. The chief orders the *sbûr*, scouts on camels: "*Ewiżú 'ala ha-l-ḳowm*, examine this detachment of the enemy well." On their return they will report: "*Awaḳna 'alejhom*, we have looked them over," and give a detailed report. With the same thoroughness will a maiden examine her lover when he returns from a raid, anxious to know if and what booty he brings. *Wsiż* is the same as *aḥiḍ*, i. e. a herd, *ṭarâ*, captured from the enemy. *Ḳalâje'* are the mares of the foes thrown from the saddle.

Mamdûḥ w-allâh mâ narûḥ
naḥûż 'enda dijârna
la'ujûn min ḳarnha jelûḥ
ḍabḥ as-swâri ḳârna.

O Mamdûḥ, by Allâh! we shall not depart,
But harass you from our lands instead,
For the eyes of her whose plait is appearing —
For the killing of troopers is our sport.

Mamdûḥ Pasha was the commander of the Turkish troops fighting the Druses in the Ḥawrân. When defeated he asked the Rwala for help, but this they refused and, instead, composed this poem. [721] *Naḥûż* means guerilla warfare, in which small regular detachments and frontier guards are attacked. [725] The regular cavalry sent by Mamdûḥ against the Rwala were beaten by them because their horses could stand the heat and thirst much better than the army horses. They awaited the soldiers in ambush, surrounded, and killed them. *Ḳâr* means hunting by lying in wait or catching the game in snares.

539a The raiders led by al-Ḳarâri were seized with giddiness
Between ar-Rwejšed and al-Ǧeṣî'.
Oh, that raid, from which there was no booty
And which made hundreds of sucklings orphans!

Al-Ḳarâri was a famous war leader of the Sba'a tribe. The Rwala once surrounded his troop between the valleys of ar-Rwéšed and al-Ǧeṣî'a and killed them almost to a man. *Fuswadat*: they captured; the booty is called *foud*. *Rawǧe* is giddiness; *ruswaǧat*: they spin around as if giddy. The Sba'a, who raise great numbers of goats and sheep, are often derided by the Rwala as suffering from giddiness themselves.

Ǧawwa-s-sbûr w-aḫraṭaw al-aǧelle
w-arčebaw 'alejhen ḳaffalaw kill miḥwâl.

When the enemy's camel scouts came to us, [our youths]
tore from the mares their long blankets,
Mounted them, and compelled each beast to lift its tail
to evacuate.

Aǧelle are the blankets protecting the mares from cold. *Ḳaffalaw*: they played with the mares till they evacuated, for this helps them to endure more fatigue.

Já 'aǧǧaten abṛi taṯîr — O dust, I wish thee to rise,
jenǧâl 'an ḳalbi ṣada' — So the dirt flies out from my heart!
aḫu šâha já 'anân al-'arûm — Šâha's brother is a check rein
elja' ṭâla' aṣ-ṣurba ḳada'. — And on sighting a troop he intones the ḳda' ditty.

●[721] Among the Šammar in al-Ǧezîre civil war once broke out, the 'Abde and Aslam tribes trying to destroy each other. At the head of the latter was the chief al-'Âṣi with his son, the war leader al-Hâdi, while the former were commanded by Ǧârallâh. Tlḥ, a son of al-'Âṣi, sought refuge with Ǧârallâh, with whose son, Abu Rweje, he formed a close friendship. The cause of the war was jealousy between the two tribes. The 'Abde had been despising the Aslam for a long time, and Ǧârallâh reproached al-'Âṣi with acting dishonorably and with having defiled his honor. These insinuations embittered al-'Âṣi's heart to such an extent that he finally declared war.

The chief and war leader of the Aslam is here called, briefly, the brother of Šâha, Aḫu Šâha, because he called the

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726* 539* from a tent other than his master's; also of a man who helps himself from a full platter set before others, without being invited. *Ḳarra* is a thing of value which some man finds and keeps. 13. Eben Ǧrajjed is a chief of the Beni 'Aṭijje. *Ṣafḥa* is the general name of the territory where the Ḥwēṭāt, Beni 'Aṭijje, and Šarārāt like to camp, because it slopes both east and west. *Ṯwe'*: the dead, buried. 14. Htejm is the term for the despised clans and tribes, thus also the Šarārāt, of whom [714] the poet is thinking. 15. *Šīāb* means attacking riders. Before the attack they divest themselves of their mantles and caftans, if they have any, entrust them to their returning comrades, *redd*, and are clothed only in their dirty gray, *šīāb*, shirts. 16. Al-'Alja, the name given by the Rwala to their white camel herds. *Medālīā* or *marākiḍ*, swift, flashing, terms applied to the Rwala owing to their mode of delivering attacks in quick succession with the suddenness of lightning. Whenever the sky is enveloped in black clouds, a wind storm rises in the desert, carrying and driving dust, fine sand, and dry plants before it and overturning all tents the pegs and ropes [721 577] of which are not tight. 18. Eben Hazzā' — i. e. an-Nūri, the commander of the Rwala — did not commit treason when he attacked the enemy. His face is without blemish, that is white. *Neḳa'* signifies integrity, honesty, which both parties to a peace treaty have to maintain. The party declaring war, returns the integrity, *neḳa'*, to the other party. He who attacks another without a declaration of war fails to return the *neḳa'* to the attacked party, commits treason, and blackens his honesty, his face. 19. *Nīādma* are gay youths, young heroes; *neāmijje*: a gay beauty, a heroine. *'Aǧǧat* is used alike for a violent passion, for rising dust, and for an approaching throng of raiders. Ḥmār maintained that *ṣubāha* meant "her youth," but 'Awde pronounced it "*ṣubāha*." According to Ḥmār the poet speaks of a gay beauty in whose veins was beating the blood of youth demanding its rights from another man, while 'Awde maintained that the poet expresses his admiration for a beauty who seeks to save, either by hiding or by flight, the camels burdened with household goods, against which a raiding troop, *ṣubāha*, was advancing, *'aǧǧat*. 22. *Ḥālāt* is an area covered with basalt and lava, where neither horse nor rider can move except by a few narrow paths. The Rwala drove the defeated enemy as far as the borders of such an area. The defeated mourned, the victors sang.